

May 29, 2015

The following was sent to the KYAE list-serv.

Week 4 Message



It is not about the test, it is about the outcomes for test-takers

There has been much discussion and many articles written about the 2014 GED® test and the other high school equivalency tests that have emerged. **While Kentucky has continued with the GED® test, KYAE has actively monitored and participated in discussions with the publishers of the other high school equivalency tests (currently in their infancy) and with the adult education leaders in states that offer those tests.** We continue to carefully evaluate the implementation and results of the new entrants in the high school equivalency test arena.

It took five years and tens of millions of dollars to develop the 2014 GED® test. The development was begun by the American Council on Education, a non-profit, higher education association located in Washington DC. In 2011, the American Council on Education entered into a partnership with Pearson, a for-profit firm that is a global leader in education. The resulting partnership led to the development of GED Testing Service® which is located in Bloomington, MN. One of the purposes of the partnership was to access the robust, computer-testing system already in place and available through Pearson. Most KCTCS college assessment centers were already Pearson VUE testing centers (administering other assessments) – and had also been GED® testing centers.

The move to computer testing actually began prior to the release of the 2014 GED® test. Kentucky began offering the GED® test on computer in 2012. That meant pieces were already in place for the 2014 GED® test before any other high school equivalency tests were available. With that footprint in place, we were able to operationalize access to the new test for our students much sooner.

With 40 states continuing to offer the GED® test, the GED® test is available in more states than any other high school equivalency test. Because it has been available for more than 70 years, the GED® test has universal brand recognition and is the most recognized by employers and postsecondary institutions in every state.

The 2014 GED® test was developed to help test-takers prepare for today's available jobs. Both employers and postsecondary institutions were asking for increased rigor. Employers who specify they want employees to have a high school diploma or GED® diploma are indicating they expect mastery of a secondary course of study. If the jobs offered by the employer do not require that level of academic rigor, the employer has the option of either not specifying educational attainment or of selecting another credential such as the NCRC. **But the fact is, the jobs that are available, and often go unfilled, are those that require a high school level of completion plus either additional job training or postsecondary certification or degrees. The high school credential we provide must prepare people for that additional training.**

Making sure our test-takers can compete with traditional high school graduates and have the knowledge and skills to go on for additional training or education will lead to available employment opportunities that can provide family-sustaining wages. That should be the common mission of KYAE and adult educators. It is not about the test, but about what we can offer to get the best long-term outcomes for our students.

If you have additional questions, contact Rae Smith at rae.smith@ky.gov.

WANT TO KNOW WHAT THIS IS ABOUT? Find out about the May Messages Learn & Win Challenge here: <http://kyae.ky.gov/educators/maymessages.htm>.